

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 09605 092038Z

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, UR

SUBJECT: SPEECH BY DEPUTY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS CHAIRMAN

TIKHONOV ON FULLER UTILIZATION OF SOVIET UNION'S

RAW MATERIAL RESOURCES

1. SUMMARY - DRAFT LEGISLATION PRESENTED TO SUPREME SOVIET
SESSION JULY 8 BY DEPUTY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS CHAIRMAN N.A.
TIKHONOV POINTS UP HEIGHTENED SOVIET CONCERN OVER INDUSTRIAL
USE OF NON-RENEWABLE RAW MATERIAL RESOURCES. NEW LEGISLATION,
NOTED TIKHONOV, EMPHASIZES NEED FOR PLANNED, ECONOMIC, AND
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PRAGMATIC APPROACHES TO EXPLOITATION OF COUNTRY'S MINERAL

RESOURCES, INCLUDING ENERGY SOURCES. GOALS
INCLUDE: FULLER EXTRACTION FROM EXISTING MINES AND WELLS;
MORE INTENSIVE AND ACCURATE GEOLOGICAL EXPLORATION; AND
GREATER UTILIZATION OF MINERAL BY-PRODUCTS. TIKHONOV
TOUCHED LIGHTLY ON ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIREMENTS (PARTICULARLY
"RE-CULTIVATION" OF LANDS SCARRED BY OPEN-PIT AND OTHER
MINING) AND DIRECTED CRITICISM AT MINISTRIES OF GEOLOGY AND
NON-FERROUS METALLURGY FOR DELAYS, INEFFICIENCY, AND WASTAGE
OF VALUABLE BY-PRODUCTS. IN GENERAL, TIKHONOV SPEECH IS
KEYNOTE CALL FOR MUCH MORE CAREFUL MANAGEMENT OF SOVIET UNION'S
RAW MATERIAL RESOURCK, AND IS PROBABLY THE HARBINGER OF
LENGTHY PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN ON SUBJECT. END SUMMARY

2. DELIVERING PRINCIPAL SPEECH BEFORE JOINT SESSION OF
COUNCILS OF THE UNION AND OF NATIONALITIES AT OPENING SUPREME
SOVIET SESSION JUNE 8, DEPUTY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS CHAIRMAN
N.A. TIKHONOV DISCUSSED DRAFT LEGISLATION, APPLICABLE EQUALLY
TO USSR AS WHOLE AND TO EACH UNION REPUBLIC INDIVIDUALLY,
CONCERNING MINERAL RESOURCES. SPEECH REFLECTS SERIOUS OFFICIAL
CONCERN OVER CONTINUING INEFFICIENT USE OF "NON-
REPRODUCIBLE" MINERALS AND OTHER RAW MATERIAL RESOURCES AND
CALLS FOR MULTI-FACETED PROGRAM TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM OUTPUT FROM
MINING/METALLURGICAL AND FUELS/ENERGY INDUSTRIES. IN THE PRO-
CESS HE TAKES TO TASK USSR MINISTRIES OF GEOLOGY AND NON-
FERROUS METALLURGY WHOSE INEPTNESS, RESPECTIVELY, IN
QUANTITATIVELY AND QUALITATIVELY UNCOVERING NEW RESERVES AND
IN MAKING MAXIMUM USE OF MINERAL BY-PRODUCTS AT METAL ORE
PROCESSING CENTERS REQUIRES IMMEDIATE CORRECTION. MAIN
DIRECTIONS IN DRAFT LEGISLATION INCLUDE:
-- MORE EFFICIENT EXTRACTION FROM EXISTING MINES AND WELLS
(STRESS ON OPEN-PIT MINING AS "HIGHLY EFFECTIVE" METHOD OF
MINERAL EXTRACTION);
-- IMPROVEMENT OF MATERIALS FOR SHAFTS AND DRILLING TECHNOLOGY
IN OIL INDUSTRY, WHERE FROM 10 TO 25 PERCENT GREATER OUTPUT
COULD BE ACHIEVED;
-- EFFORTS TO REDUCE LOSSES IN EXTRACTION OF SOLID MINERAL
ORES AND, PARTICULARLY, OIL AND GAS;
-- "COMPOSITE" APPROACH TO PROCESSING METAL ORES, SO AS NOT
TO WASTE VALUABLE BY-PRODUCTS;
-- INTRODUCTION OF MORE EFFICIENT TECHNOLOGICAL PROCESSES
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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 09605 092038Z

AND AUTOMATED EQUIPMENT AT NORILSK COPPER/NICKEL AND URALS
NICKEL DEPOSITS;
-- DEVELOPING INDUSTRIAL PROCESS FOR RECOVERING COMMERCIALY
USABLE AMOUNTS OF RAW MATERIALS (SUCH AS SULPHURIC ACID)
WHILE PURIFYING AIR AND WATER EFFLUENTS OF INDUSTRIAL PLANTS;
-- IMPROVING GEOLOGICAL EXPLORATORY WORK SO THAT BOTH
QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF NEWLY-DISCOVERED RESERVES CAN BE
ASCERTAINED BEFORE EXPENSIVE CAPITAL INVESTMENTS ARE MADE FOR

EXTRACTION;

- RESTORING LANDS SCARRED BY OPEN-PIT AND OTHER MINING TO PRODUCTIVE USES ("RE-CULTIVATION", WHICH PRESUMABLY MEANS RETURNING LANDS TO FERTILE STATE FOR USE IN AGRICULTURE, WILL BE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT);
- INTRODUCTION OF NEW PERFORMANCE INDICES INTO ANNUAL AND FIVE YEAR PLANS TO MEASURE MINING/METALLURGICAL INDUSTRIES' EFFICIENCY IN EXTRACTING AND PROCESSING RAW MATERIALS AND IN ACHIEVING "COMPOSITE" UTILIZATION OF THEM.

3. COMMENT: EMBASSY'S INITIAL IMPRESSION FROM TIKHONOV SPEECH IS THAT IT IS FULL OF SCARCELY-SUPPRESSED OFFICIAL CONCERN OVER FATE OF NON-RENEWABLE RAW MATERIAL RESOURCES NOW BEING PROCESSED WITH GREAT WASTAGE. THIS IN TURN WOULD APPEAR TO BE CONFIRMATION THAT SOVIETS ARE CLOSELY WATCHING DEVELOPMENTS THROUGHOUT WORLD WHERE GROWING SCARCITY OF RAW MATERIALS (WHETHER FOR POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC REASONS) CONJURES UP GENUINE REARS OF AN ANALOGOUS SITUATION AT HOME SOMEDAY BECOMING REALITY. IN ANY CASE, WITH ADOPTION OF THIS LEGISLATION SOVIET POLICY WILL BE FIRMLY ON SIDE OF ECONOMIC AND RATIONAL UTILIZATION OF COUNTRY'S RAW MATERIALS. WHETHER POLICY WILL BE TRANSFORMED INTO PRACTICE IS, HOWEVER, ANOTHER MATTER ALTOGETHER.

BREMENT

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